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Volume 61, Number 3



mind

Mensa Newsletter
Of Central Indiana



Larry Leprechaun and the Mensa Owl wish you a Happy St Patrick's Day!

Publishing Statement

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MIND contributions may be sent to mind.editor@yahoo.com, or Richard Gibson, 5726 Toad Hollow Ln, Indianapolis, IN 46220. Contributions may be edited for length or to remove offensive material and may not include personal attacks. No anonymous contributions will be published, but the Editor will withhold the author's name from the public on request. Contributions should be submitted no later than the Friday following the ExCom meeting (usually the third Friday of the month) for the following month's edition.

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From the Editor's Cubicle

Rich Gibson, Editor

Well, we have some fallout happening from the January Massacre of 2 appointed members of the AMC and 8 elected Regional Vice Chairs. One of the ousted RVCs, our (Region 4) own Matt Crawford, has written a defense of his conduct insofar as he is forbidden to reveal any of the events during the September confidential session.

For a little more insight, the Theodore Talks guru Brad Lucht has put together all the information he's managed to gather. I can't publish all he's found, but you should be able to browse to your heart's content with the links he's provided.

As your editor, I think I'm supposed to have a serious, weighty, informed opinion on all this. I'm afraid all I can come up with is: take a deep breath. Read all the information you can find. Discuss it with people whose judgment you trust. If you think action is required, take it. A number of instruments are in consideration, and one, a recall petition, is already circulating. You'll find the link in Brad's article. Make up your own mind. Do what you think is best.

That's if you want to be involved at all. Many, many, many surveys of Mensans reveal that the activities of their local groups give them the most satisfaction, and this issue need not have any impact at all on the doings of Central Indiana Mensa. If you'd rather let the tempests rage anywhere so long as it's out of your line of sight, that's fine with me. I actually plan to mostly go that route myself. We'll see if I can follow through on that.

In related news, we now have a Regional Coordinator (RC) to represent Region 4 at the AMC. Her name is Beth Weiss; as you'll see from her column in this issue, she brings a ton of experience to the job. She was selected at a meeting of all the LocSecs in the region, and will serve until a special election produces a new RVC. Beth's duties encompass all the duties and responsibilities of an RVC, save that she cannot vote at AMC meetings. This is in accordance with New York state law—in which state the AML is incorporated.

The rest of this issue, as usual, is filled with poetry, puzzles, and events you can attend or Zoom into. Hope you have a wonderful March. On a personal note, Jackie and I will be back in the frozen north, back home in Indiana, by the time you're reading this. In the mean time, have a wonderful March and...



HAPPY ST PATRICK'S DAY!

LocSection

Jan Pfeil Doyle

It's Renewal Time – It's that time of year: membership renewal time. If you're not a life member, your dues are due March 31st. You should have received a bill from the national office recently; you can pay by mail or online at us.mensa.org>> My Mensa>>RenewMyMembership. I hope you'll renew!



CultureQuest® – Speaking of March 31st deadlines, that's also the deadline for registering our CultureQuest® teams. CultureQuest® is an international Mensa quiz competition. Teams of up to five people will compete on May 4th at 4pm ET. There's also a “Next Generation” quiz for teams whose members were born on or after May 1, 2007. For the Next Generation team, only the team captain must be a current Mensa member. If you would like to participate, or have questions, please email Ann Hake at amhake@yahoo.com or me at jan@mw.net well before Mar. 31st (and be sure to renew by March 31st). Info at www.us.mensa.org/attend/culturequest/.

March Monthly Gathering Program (Zoom and In Person) –

Procrastinators New Years Eve Party² – Because of the weather we switched the January meeting to Zoom only (many thanks to **Teresa Gregory** for pulling together an alternative program with a couple hours' notice). Anyhow, we'll have the games, conversation, and an optional interactive murder mystery at the March monthly gathering (Mar 14). Bring a game if you like.

Regional Coordinator Named + RVC Election – Beth Weiss from Chicago Mensa has been named Region 4's Regional Coordinator, representing us on the AMC, Mensa's national board. A special election will be held from May 27-June 19th to elect a new Regional Vice Chair. If you're interested in running for RVC, details and requirements can be found at www.us.mensa.org/lead/amc/elections/amc-2025-special-election/. Beth is the only candidate so far for Region 4. You can sign her petition at www.us.mensa.org/lead/amc/elections/candidate-petitions/petition-signatures/?id=5802A21F-84EF-4DAD-95CDA36E74340269.

Mark Your Calendars for the Outdoor Mensa Gathering (OMG!) in May – I hope to see many of you at CIM's Outdoor Gathering on May 16-18. It's our annual camping weekend at the Versailles (Indiana) State Park. We rent the group camp and stay in dormitory-style cabins. There's a central building where we hang out, play games, eat, etc. Outdoor activities include hiking and a campfire. It's a wonderful, fun, relaxing weekend! If you can't stay for the whole weekend, come for the day on Saturday. More details in upcoming newsletters.

Please remember to renew your membership by March 31st !!

Poetry

Marilyn Wolf

Is That My Father

I'm on that plane.
Or is it my father?
Never really sure
where I start
where he ends. Both
watching and flying.
I hold my suitcase
with his hand.
He lowers the tray
with mine.
I'm tall, he's old,
I can look him in the eye
now.
We walked to the gate
together.
Which one of us boarded?
Who was left standing?

We never see
each other
again.

The day my soul grew silent.



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Puzzle Column

Written by Alan Stillson of Greater Los Angeles Mensa and reprinted with permission of the author (<http://stillsonworks.com>)

Four Es a Jolly Good Solver

Find words that contain 4 Es, based on the clues and letter counts.

Example: A business owner (12 letters) = entrepreneur

1. A service station staple (8 letters)
2. Non-deciduous (9 letters)
3. Zebra (7 letters)
4. Fill with repeated sound waves (11 letters)
5. An important CV section (10 letters)
6. One with 434 colleagues (14 letters)
7. Notwithstanding (12 letters)
8. Exchanged reward points (8 letters)
9. March slainte day (11 letters)
10. Debilitate (8 letters)

Solutions on page 20

2025-26 Book Group Reading List

Rich Gibson

Title	Author(s)	Date
Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World	Jack Weatherford	3/16/2025
The Case for Colonialism	Bruce Gilley Adam	4/20/2025
American Midnight	Hochschild	5/18/2025
Fever in the Heartland	Timothy Egan	6/15/2025
Beyond Genius	Bulent Atalay	7/20/2025
Sleeping Beauties	Andreas Wagner Robert	8/17/2025
Underland	Macfarlane	9/21/2025
Half Earth	E O Wilson	10/19/2025
Revenge of the Tipping Point	Malcolm Gladwell	11/16/2025
The Anxious Generation	Jonathan Haidt	12/21/2025
Boys and Men	Richard Reeves	1/18/2026
Blind Spots	Marty Makary	2/15/2026

The Singularity is Nearer	Ray Kurzweil	3/15/2026
An Unfinished Love Story	Doris Kearns Goodwin	4/19/2026
Rooted: Life at the Crossroads of Science, Nature, and Spirit	Lyanda Lynn Haupt	5/17/2026
Aging as a Spiritual Practice	Lewis Richmond	6/15/2026
4000 Weeks: Time Management for Mortals	Oliver Berkeman	7/20/2026

Mensa Book Group Previews

Rich Gibson

THIS MONTH: *Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World*, by Jack Weatherly

Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World, by Jack Weatherly, 271 pp, published in 2004, will be discussed at the Mensa Book Group meeting on Sunday, March 16th, at 2:00 PM. [Note: the practice of these previews is to list the number of pages of *text*, i.e., it does not include appendices, index, or notes—just how much the average reader would actually read] See the MIND Calendar and Events for more details.

This book is a history of Genghis Khan: his conquests, his family, and their empires. It is a travelogue, taking you to Mongolia, China, Russia, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe. It is also a meditation on the profound changes that the khans made on their world, and their resonance with features and practices that we call “modern.”

Genghis Khan conquered more people and territory in 25 years than the Romans did in 400. His sons and grandsons carved out their own empires; most notably, his grandson Kublai, who founded the Yuan Dynasty in China. Chaucer wrote of Genghis, “there was nowhere in no region/So excellent a lord in all things.” Coleridge wrote his famous poem *Kublai Khan* celebrating the beauty and exotic opulence of his palace at Xanadu. Yet today when we imagine Genghis Khan, all that comes to mind are burning cities and mountains of skulls.

There is much more to the story, even if the mountains of skulls are part of it. The author writes that the Middle East was lush, productive, and beautiful before the khans, and still has not recovered from their devastations. On the other hand, the Great Khans encouraged trade, the arts, and religious tolerance. They destroyed aristocratic privilege, abolished torture, fostered cross-cultural communications, and gave civilization a huge boost wherever they went.

We’re going to discuss this book on Sunday, March 16th at 2:00PM. We’d love for you to join us!

NEXT MONTH: *The Case for Colonialism*, by Bruce Gilley.

The Case for Colonialism, by Bruce Gilley, 321 pp, published in 2023, will be discussed at the Mensa Book Group meeting on Sunday, April 20, at 2:00 PM.] See the MIND Calendar and Events for more details.

“Colonialism” is pretty much a bad word and has been since before WWII. Intellectuals, politicians, and statesmen from former colonies blame colonialism for practically every problem and evil from which they suffer today. It is linked to, and nearly synonymous with other bad words such as “racism” and “imperialism.”

The book and the academic article it evolved from have triggered enormous controversy, most notably in academic circles. Two quotes from the book will give you a sense of its thrust: “many or most episodes of Western colonialism” led to “expanded education, improved public health, the abolition of slavery, widened employment opportunities,” and more. Furthermore, “Anti-colonialism [has] ravaged countries as nationalist elites mobilized illiterate populations with appeals to destroy the market economies, pluralistic and constitutional polities, and rational policy processes of European colonizers.” If this were not enough, the author further proposes a return to colonialism as a solution to some of these modern problems: He endorses a proposal of the chief economist of the World Bank, whose “charter city” concept calls for developing countries to lease land to a more stable foreign power and thereby spur a thriving economy a la Hong Kong.

Well! Backlash has been enormous. The original article was withdrawn from the periodical that published it, and its editor resigned following death threats. The emotion of the backlash is at a fever pitch.

I have not searched diligently for intelligent counter-arguments to this thesis, although I suspect that George Orwell’s *Burmese Days*, about his life as a police officer in the British colony of Burma, might be a good starting place. Whether you are intrigued or outraged, please consider reading this book, marshalling your own reaction and supplementing it with some supporting or countering arguments, and coming to discuss this at our Book Group meeting on Sunday, April 20th, at 2:00 PM. Hope to see you then!

Calling all Trivia Buffs!

Ann Hake

Are you a font of useful (or useless) knowledge? Do you like challenging quizzes? Do you like having a good time? If so, Central Indiana Mensa wants you for CultureQuest©!

CultureQuest© is a friendly competition that tests the “cultural literacy” of groups of Mensans in the form of a giant trivia quiz that occurs simultaneously across the US and Canada. Did you know that CIM has had at least one team that has placed in the top 20 teams for this illustrious contest for the past 4 years? Help CIM extend the streak!

This year’s CultureQuest© will be held virtually on Sunday, May 4, 2025, beginning at 4:00 pm EDT. Teams will have 90 minutes to answer the test

questions, then another 60 minutes to enter their answers online. Teams may consist of up to 5 primary players and up to 2 alternates. All team members must be dues-paid US or Canada Mensa members for the 2025-26 membership year as of April 1, 2025.

The complete official rules can be found online

at <https://www.us.mensa.org/attend/culturequest/culturequest-xxxvi-contest-rules-registration/>

Registration closes on March 31, 2025. If you would like to participate, or if you have questions, please email Ann Hake at amhake@yahoo.com or Jan Pfeil Doyle at jan@mw.net.

AG 2025, All Fired Up



Daisy has been keeping a close watch on the Annual Gathering (AG) Team as they work tirelessly to prepare for the 2025 AG, happening July 2–6 in Chicago. She also made a surprise appearance at a local regional gathering on Halloween weekend!

The 2025 AG will be held at the downtown Hilton Chicago, located at 720 S. Michigan Avenue. And get this: the room rate is only \$139 per night for single, double, triple, or quad rooms! Yes, you read that right! Plus, enjoy free WiFi in both the hospitality area and your sleeping room.

Your registration includes four breakfasts, three lunches, and plenty of snacks—available in hospitality throughout the event. The current adult member registration rate is \$359 through March 31.

We’ve got a lot of exciting programs and interactive opportunities lined up for everyone to enjoy. And who knows, Daisy and her herd might even make a few surprise appearances! Be sure to check out the AG website for details on tours and more. Note: tickets for the Gala Dinner have sold out.

Registration for both the AG and hotel is available at ag.us.mensa.org. Remember, you’ll need to register for the AG before securing your hotel reservation. At this time, rooms are available from July 2–6 and also for the nights of July 7 & 8.

Daisy and the AG Team can’t wait to see you in Chicago!

March 2025 Events

LIVE Ham 'n' Eggs (Hamilton County Eggheads) – 1st Saturday

3/1, 10:00am - 12 noon ET - Atrio, 11700 Illinois St, Carmel, IN, (located at IU Health North) **RSVP:** Alison Brown, 317-846-6798, SIGHT@indymensa.org

Indy Lunch Bunch – 1st and 3rd Wednesday

3/5, 12:00 noon ET - Virtual *Online*

3/19, 12:00 noon ET - MCL Restaurant and Bakery, 2370 W. 86th St

RSVP Karen Steilberger, steilkr@sbcglobal.net

LIVE Mensa Chowhounds Lunch – 2nd and 4th Wednesday

3/12, 2:00pmET - Maggie's Bistro Inside Allisonville Home & Garden
11405 Allisonville Rd, Fishers, IN 46038

3/26, 2:00pmET The Garage Food Hall, 906 Carrollton Ave

For more information or to RSVP, contact Bob Zdanky at 317-912-3590.

VIRTUAL Sunday Social – Some Sundays (check the calendar) from 7:00pm

–8:30pm ET Drop in any time for casual chat. Contact: Teresa,

ag18tg@yahoo.com.

LIVE Supper Before the Meeting - 2nd Friday

3/14, 5:00pmET - The Burger Joint, 5450 E Fall Creek Pkwy N Dr

RSVP Jan Pfeil Doyle, 317-431-3500 (voice or text) or jan@mw.net

VIRTUAL and LIVE Monthly Gathering - 2nd Friday,

3/14, 7:00pm – 11:00pm ET

All Souls Unitarian Church, 5805 E. 56th Street, Indianapolis, IN 46226. See last page of MIND for map and directions. Members: \$7.00, Non-Members: \$10.00; Children 6- 18: \$5.00, under 6: free.

Procrastinators' New Years Eve/ Spring Edition! Join us in ringing in the New Year...just a little late! We will have the traditional Games Night plus if anyone wants to join in, we will have a murder mystery party where you can play a role. We will do a hybrid so that those who join us on Zoom can also play. Please RSVP Teresa and she will send you your part. ag18tg@yahoo.com

LIVE Games and Conversation Night – 3rd Saturday, Odd Months

3/15, 7:00pm – 10:30pm ET

Westfield, IN

Join Candis and Robert King for an evening of Games & Conversation. **Please call 630-642-9063 or 630-253-1350** to say you'll be there and to get the address.

VIRTUAL and LIVE Book Group

3/16, 2:00pm ET

Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World, by Jack Weatherford

For more details, to RSVP, or for Zoom link, contact Rich Gibson at hoot.gibson.tds@gmail.com or 770-548-5217.

LIVE Mensans Dining Out - 3rd Sunday

3/16 6pm ET

Gray Brothers Cafeteria, 555 S Indiana St, Mooresville, IN 46158

For more information or to RSVP, contact Bob Zdanky at 317-912-3590.

March 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
2 *Sunday Social*	3	4	5 *Lunch Bunch*
9 Daylight Saving Time; *Sunday Social*	10	11	12 Chowhounds
16 Book Group; Dining Out	17 St Patrick's Day	18 * ExCom*	19 Lunch Bunch
23 *Sunday Social*	24	25	26 Chowhounds
30 *Sunday Social*	31		

Virtual Zoom Events

Important Info for In-Person Events: Be Kind!—As we are entering cold and flu season, if you're not feeling well or have any symptoms such as a fever, cough, runny nose, COVID, etc, PLEASE be courteous to your fellow members and don't attend.

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Ham'n Eggs
6	7	8
13	14 Supper Before; Monthly Gathering	15 Games Night
20 First Day of Spring!	21	22
27	28	29

If you lose your *MIND* (oh, my!) or want additional information, check www.indymensa.org. Also, check the weekly CIM ReMINDER every Monday in your email.

Regional Coordinator (RC) Column

Beth Weiss

Since this is my first column as a Regional Coordinator, I'll share a bit about myself. I've been a member of Mensa for 23 years, first as a member of Dayton Area Mensa and now as a member of Chicago Area Mensa. I've volunteered at the local level (LocSec, Communications Officer, proctor, many RG committee positions), the regional level (Region 3 webspinner), the national level (2022 AG chair, other AG committee positions, long time member of the SIGs Committee, LDW presenter), and am Coordinator for two national SIGs (HELL's M's, Sew Sew SeaMs). My husband is a Mensan (we met at an AG). My two kids both joined Mensa as teens and were very active until life got in the way. My closest friends are people I've met through Mensa. Mensa is a big part of my life; I'm honored that the Region 4 LocSecs selected me to be the Regional Coordinator (RC) until the Special Election to elect new Regional Vice Chairs (RVCs).



All 8 of the new Regional Coordinators are non-voting members of the American Mensa Committee (AMC). We do have a voice at the table and we can and will provide support to the Local Groups.

There are two significant aspects to the Regional Coordinator role—just as there are to the RVC role. Both are members of the AMC responsible for setting strategy and goals; overseeing resources; and determining financial commitments—all in keeping of the long-term interests of Mensa. The second aspect is supporting the local groups and representing their needs.

As LocSec for Chicago Area Mensa, I frequently turned to our then-RVC Jon Gruebele (now 1st Vice Chair) as a sounding board and for advice. Every Local Group has developed their practices. I'd like us to be able to share successes so other groups can determine if that approach will also work for them. Local Groups have challenges, too—and another group may be able to share a path that worked for them.

Every person in leadership has their style—mine is based on a project management framework which emphasizes collaboration to deliver results. The framework calls for servant-leaders instead of managers. That servant-leader's goal is to ensure all team members have what they need for the team to succeed. That's how I intend to approach my new role as Regional Coordinator—both as a member of the AMC and in support of Region 4's Local Groups.

The Road to Hurst...is Paved with Potholes

Matt Crawford

Just seven months ago, I was heading into my term on the AMC as your RVC. In all, eight of the ten RVCs were brand-new to the board. Though I had met three of them before, I discovered quickly that most of us “freshmen” shared a few core values: a desire to take stand against bullying, a drive to increase accountability, and an aspiration to open the curtains on what we consider the AMC’s pervasive veil of secrecy.

We knew this wouldn’t be an easy road to walk. There has been a significant lack of transparency for a long time and, as you’ll recall, we took office on the heels of a dues increase that was justified in no other way than keeping up with inflation. Almost immediately, we started to painfully discover what we were up against. Disparaging comments conspiring against our freshman class were made by some of the continuing AMC members behind the curtains a month before we even got in the door. This went on in full view of the Chair, who apparently did nothing about it.

We immediately found ourselves in a climate unabashedly resistant to change and to member involvement. As an example, I found that our orientation materials contained an incorrect statement concerning vote tabulation. When I brought this up, the now-former Executive Director doubled down on it. I persisted. Only after consulting legal counsel did he back down and allow the process to be fixed. I reviewed old minutes and found several votes that would have come out the opposite way if abstentions and absences had been correctly understood. This error almost certainly would have continued had I not stood my ground. For another example, there was great resistance to preserving the officer involvement in budgeting that was specified in the ASIEs, but had been ignored for years.

A sampling of other things we learned of during our brief six months on the AMC includes a \$450 dinner for three charged to Mensa, contracts signed with no authorizing vote recorded in any minutes, and a number of factually inaccurate statements by the Chair in open and closed sessions. And we brought to light one long-standing and ongoing violation of law. (After persisting through more inaccurate and contradictory statements we did get it acknowledged and corrected. I am fairly certain no member has been adversely affected by it.)

I am able to write of the foregoing issues because none of them was in the hearing of January 11. We ten representatives and officers were. The correlation is compelling, but I can make no provable claim of causation.

But you want to read about the hearing. We ten can’t tell you of the hearing, really, because there are still more penalties they could impose for such revelations. However, I can assemble some hearing-adjacent facts.

First, you have not seen the Hearings Committee’s decision. That decision is secret, and it’s much longer than the summary that was put about. I wish you could read it, for reasons that would probably be risky for me to tell. The summary of it, which has been widely circulated, seems crafted for maximum reputational impact.

Let me say a few things about the American Mensa hearings process. Until December, Complainants had an enormous advantage over Respondents in all hearings: A Complainant could prepare their complaint without restriction on communicating with others, because there was no hearing in process yet, so no rule of confidentiality. Once the Respondents are informed of charges, there is a hearings process under way and they could not speak of it. This precluded even telling a Respondent's witness what the subject of their testimony was to be. If that sounds absurd to you, you aren't alone, but the Hearings chair, questioned directly about it, did not disagree. Since December 26 (Motion B on the agenda), the confidentiality rules may no longer be construed to impede parties to hearings from preparing their cases.

According to Mensa International Bylaws 13.3, "*Every national Mensa must ensure that a fair and reasonable independent internal discipline procedure is in place. This procedure must include an independent appeals procedure.*" We have no appeals procedure, independent or otherwise. And when the parties to a hearing are AMC members, or recent AMC members, it's very hard to call what hearings process we do have "independent," since the hearings committee consists of the three most recent AMC chairs.

And how is it that an independent appeals process is mandatory, but we don't have one? I don't know the full answer, but I do know that Mensa International has an International Standards Committee that is "tasked with monitoring compliance with international requirements for national Mensas as prescribed in the International Constitution and in IBD actions." (MIL Bylaws 6,4) The current chair of that committee is a member of AML's Hearings Committee and one supposes she finds her work much more comfortable knowing there is no appeal or review.

Another fact worth noting is that the Hearings Committee itself routinely ignores the communication requirement of Hearings bylaw IX(5)(b). They put the blame on the AMC chair for that, which I think is questionable. Wherever the responsibility lies, this had a significant impact on this case, since the few AMC members not involved in this hearing process had no idea what was being done to the majority, or why.

The AMC cannot change bylaws, and neither can the Hearings Committee. Only the members can, and the lack of an appeals procedure is a bylaws defect. In December we tried to put on the best band-aid we could, which would have been to apply the AMC review to every hearing. We were shouted down with many factually incorrect claims about international and AML bylaws. Then we tried to pull back the veil of secrecy and were shouted down with misleading claims about law. You can replay this all on the recording, but I don't wish the experience on you.

What about the decision, or rather the report, that we all can read? It says the ten "violated the Bylaws," but does not say how. The open portion of the meeting contained nothing untoward. Many have concluded that the alleged violation must have occurred during the prior executive session. As we all know, any actions or votes in executive session are reported out by the Secretary immediately afterward. The only items so reported were the appointments of a

Mind Games Chair and an Elections Committee. And the violation doesn't seem to be any votes taken, else why were two non-voting officers condemned along with the rest? Since there was no recording, and note-taking is forbidden, it all comes down to the word of the powerful against the word of the new kids.

The bottom line is we did not violate any bylaws, but to show the gaping holes in the Hearings Committee's argument would break confidentiality. And then we *would* be violating bylaws. *Catch-98*.

Reform Mensa

Brad Lucht

I have put together a document that provides some background regarding the recent actions of the AML Hearings Committee. It contains information from several sources with direct knowledge of the September 21st AMC meeting, which has not been provided to our membership. It also includes a list of actions members can take (should they decide to do so) and quotes from all applicable governing documents.

<https://tinyurl.com/MensaHearingsInfo>



Theodore Talks

Brad Lucht/Shirley Mouer

This year, in an effort to promote 2025 AG attendance, the first seven talks will focus on some of Chicago's unique attractions. For March, in a Theodore Talk first, we're offering TWO Theodore Talks. That's right, it's a **DoubleTEDer!**

The title of the first March Theodore Talk is, "**Shedd Aquarium's Centennial Voyage: Navigating a Century of Wonder**". This virtual event will take place

on Zoom March 23 at 1:00 p.m. Central Time (2:00 Eastern, 11:00 a.m. Pacific, 6:00 GMT)

Approaching its 100th anniversary, Shedd Aquarium is embarking on a thrilling transformation through its Centennial Commitment — a visionary initiative reimagining what an aquarium can be in the modern age. This bold undertaking aims to revolutionize the guest experience with immersive exhibits and cutting-edge technology, enhance animal care with state-of-the-art facilities, and expand Shedd's global conservation efforts. Central to this transformation is an evolution of the aquarium experience itself. Historic galleries are being metamorphosed, and more than 40,000 square feet of new immersive spaces are being created. Mensans visiting Chicago in July can embark on captivating journeys offering fresh perspectives on the living world, featuring biodiverse environments, interactive exhibits, and up-close wildlife encounters — all designed to inspire wonder and cultivate a deeper connection to aquatic life.

Meghan Curran, Chief Marketing and Experience Officer at Shedd Aquarium, will delve into how this institution continues to evolve and innovate for the next generation. She will discuss how Shedd harnesses its rich history to inform groundbreaking changes benefiting both guests and animals.

Register for this presentation at <https://tinyurl.com/4n3sctsh>.

"Chicago's Best Art Deco Skyscrapers" is the title of our second talk of the day, which will begin at 3 p.m. (4:00 p.m. Eastern, 1:00 p.m. Pacific, 8:00 GMT)

Influenced by Cubism and the art and architecture of the ancient Middle East, Art Deco was a modern European style that was showcased to the world at the International Exposition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts in Paris in 1925. In the U.S., the new style ornamented tall office buildings, built to meet the needs of the post-war business boom, and reflected the optimism and prosperity associated with the Roaring 20s.

This program, presented by the Chicago Architecture Center, will briefly describe Deco's origins and characteristics, then explore in detail five downtown Deco skyscrapers, all of which are official city landmarks meticulously restored to their original glory.

Register for this presentation at <https://tinyurl.com/38u2z4r7>.

NOTE: These are two SEPARATE talks. You must register for each one individually.

Even if you can't attend the live Theodore Talk, as long as you register in advance you will receive a link to the Zoom recording of the event. All Theodore Talks have Closed Captioning enabled.

Remember, Theodore Talks are offered free to all members in an effort to provide more value to your membership.

Theodore Talks take place on Zoom the fourth Sunday of each month, this month ONLY at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. CT.

A list of future Theodore Talks can be found on the [Mensa National Events Calendar](#), by visiting the [American Mensa home page](#), or by viewing the [January issue of the Mensa Bulletin](#). The article on the 2025 Theodore Talks begins on p. 26.

Questions? Contact Brad Lucht at MensaTheodoreTalks@gmail.com

Books On The Runway

Larry Marcus

Author: Mario Livio and Jack Szostak

Title: *Is Earth Exceptional?*

Publisher: Basic Books

Year: 2024

Has Been Read by: Larry Marcus

Book Description: It's not often that you find a renowned astrophysicist (Livio) and a Nobel Prize winning biologist (Szostak) teaming up to write a popular book that explains the current state of our knowledge of life in the universe. The first half of the book gives reasons that carbon is the only element capable of giving rise to life and outlines the first steps in synthesizing amino acids from available prebiotic geology. They discuss the scenarios of earth/ocean habitats (pond, ocean, etc.) that could support the progress of chemical reactions that gave rise to such amino acids and eventually the "RNA World" and then DNA. Comment: The authors are not a fan of the oceanic hydrothermal vent origins of life. Livio and Szostak critique well the Miller-Urey "primordial soup" experiments. They explain how lipids (fatty molecules) are formed and how lipids can form a cell wall to enclose the eventual DNA. The second half summarizes what we know, so far in possibilities for life in the solar system and projects those possibilities out to other worlds in the galaxy. How the Webb and Hubble space telescopes can detect life signs outside the solar system and what they have found so far are reviewed. Livio and Szostak give interesting conjectures on what alternate life forms might exist "out there".

Has this book changed the way you think, your attitude toward life, or even your life itself? If so, how?

Livio and Szostak have considerably extended my understanding of the progress of life from mere chemicals/geology to reproducing life. The picture of this process in my mind is clearer than ever.

Who should definitely read this book? Why? Anyone who fancies themselves a foodie would enjoy it but also anyone who tends to make snap judgments about people (you know who you are—be honest) based upon superficial indicia.

How long might it take to read this book? About a week should suffice to read this book, but high school chemistry is probably needed to traverse the first half of the book easily. Any inquisitive, science-minded individual will profit from reading what Livio and Szostak have to say.

Give a short characteristic section, an awesome sentence, or an inspiring quote: The aim of the book is best expressed by the authors themselves in the first words of the epilogue of the book: “How did life on Earth begin? Has life emerged elsewhere in our galaxy? These were the two major, fundamental questions with which we started this book.” Reasonably, they conclude that the scenarios presented are reasonable but “more research is needed”.



Shriyan Srinivasan	Carmel	IN	Move In
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Solutions to February Puzzle:

1. A service station staple (8 letters) = squeegee
2. Non-deciduous (9 letters) = evergreen
3. Zebra (7 letters) = referee
4. Fill with repeated sound waves (11 letters) = reverberate
5. An important CV section (10 letters) = experience
6. One with 434 colleagues (14 letters) = Representative
7. Notwithstanding (12 letters) = nevertheless
8. Exchanged reward points (8 letters) = redeemed
9. March slainte day (11 letters) = Seventeenth
10. Debilitate (8 letters) = enfeeble

Central Indiana Mensa ExCom 1/21/25

Karen Wilczewski, Secretary

The regular monthly meeting of the Central Indiana Mensa ExCom was held virtually via Zoom on Tuesday, January 21, 2025.

LocSec Jan Pfeil Doyle called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

Members present: Ethan Blocher-Smith, Emily Boomershine, Jan Pfeil Doyle, Ann Hake, Candis King, and Karen Wilczewski

Guests: Teresa Gregory, Jon Applegate, Rich Gibson, and Pat Milligan

Absent: Judy Weitzman

The December meeting minutes were approved as amended. Ann moved, Candis seconded. The motion passed.

Ann moved to accept the December Treasurer's Report and Candis seconded.

The motion passed.

The December membership report was compiled by Jan based on information available as of 12/31/24 from American Mensa: total members: 431; 2 new, 0 move-in, 2 rejoin, and 8 prospects.

Old Business

The January monthly meeting was held via Zoom due to the weather. No funds were collected for that meeting. In lieu of January's Procrastinators Meeting, Teresa Gregory presented a slide show of a past procrastinator's meeting and trivia test.

Candis reported that she and Judy reached out to those who attended the December Holiday Party to invite them to future monthly meetings. No one responded.

New Business

An Admissions test has been scheduled for February 16. One local candidate expressed interest. Ann will let Dayton area prospects know of our testing schedule.

CultureQuest®: Mensa's International trivia quiz competition will be held May 4. Registration for this year's event opens on February 1. Those interested in serving as team captains, should let Jan or another ExCom member know.

Ann moved that CIM sponsor any teams and, depending on the response, the appropriate number of captains. Ethan seconded the motion. The motion carried. In addition to Jan's column, a stand-alone article will appear in *MIND*.

CIM, along with 7 other regions, no longer has an RVC. The plan is for the LocSecs in each region to choose a temporary Regional Coordinator who will serve on the AMC and have all the rights and responsibilities of an RVC but will not have a vote on the AMC. The Region 4 LocSecs met last night and will have another meeting in two weeks to select the candidate for our region. Anyone on ExCom interested in being considered for Regional Coordinator should let Jan know.

Candis motioned to adjourn, Emily seconded. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.



Central Indiana Mensa

Treasurer's Report

1/31/2025

Emily Boomershine, Treasurer

Statement of Assets

Account	Balance
(1) PNC Checking – Regular	\$ 2,268.59
(2) PNC Checking – Scholarships	\$ 217.00
(3) PNC Checking – Events	\$ 3,516.61
(4) MG Petty Cash	\$ 25.00
(5) CD – First Internet	\$ 10,000.00
Total Assets	\$ 16,027.20

Other Assets

Accrued Interest on First Internet CD	\$ 425.77
USPS Stamps	\$ 227.70
Memo: Total in PNC Checking (1)+(2)+(3)	\$ 6,002.20

Statement of Activity

Activity	Amount
Receipts	
National Support	\$ 503.80
Receipts Total	\$ 503.80
Expenses	
Facility Rental (All Souls)	\$ (100.00)
MIND Printing	\$ (333.59)
Supplies	\$ (8.44)
MG Hospitality	\$ (25.00)
Expenses Total	\$ (467.03)
Net Activity	\$ 36.77

Mensa Monthly Gathering Location

All Souls Unitarian Church

5805 E. 56th St., Indianapolis

- From I-465 on the east side of Indianapolis, take the 56th St exit west (exit 40).
- Turn left on Channing Rd (1.2 miles from the I-465 exit).
- The church parking lot is on your left.
- Look for signs within the building, meeting in Beattie Room

